

President's desk, we can get a bill about youth offenders that I will introduce, a bill about building trust, which means that we don't force communities to use police officers as revenue gatherers, so it is not about how many we stop on the street or how many we give tickets to to provide money to the coffers of our local community. That puts the police sometimes in unnecessary confrontational roles when they could very well be engaging in warnings or other ways of dealing with the community. I would like to enhance PAL, the Police Athletic League, an excellent community-based approach to police and children getting to know each other. Many things can happen.

This is a significant moment that captures the constitutional premise that we want to create a more perfect Union.

JUSTICE FOR VICTIMS OF TRAFFICKING ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE) for 5 minutes.

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, chained to a bed in a warehouse, branded like cattle, these are just some of the horrific stories that I have heard from young girls who suffered as victims of human trafficking in my home State of Texas.

Human trafficking is modern-day slavery. Sadly, according to the National Human Trafficking Resource Center, Texas has the second highest number of reported instances of human trafficking in the country. My hometown of Houston is the hub for domestic trafficking of minor children.

While this dastardly underground industry has been hidden for years in plain sight, the good news is there are efforts to fight this scourge of human trafficking throughout the Nation. Earlier this week Senator CORNYN and I had the opportunity to visit the Letot Center in Dallas, Texas, where we saw firsthand what can happen when government, law enforcement, nonprofits, concerned citizens, and religious groups join together in a community to restore the lives of human trafficking victims.

We were joined by advocates from the nonprofit New Friends New Life, an organization that provides job training, financial assistance, life skills coaching, and special programs to address the challenges of survivors and their families. With the addition of a brand-new all-female facility, the Letot Center and groups like New Friends New Life not only provide a safe home for trafficking victims, but help arm them with the resources to rebuild their lives.

One remarkable young lady that we met—I will call her Amanda because that is her name—became a victim of human trafficking after she was kidnapped in Dallas at the age of 15. For 9 years she lived in slavery, in terror, as she was repeatedly sold every day for sex.

Through New Friends New Life's approach, one that addresses the physical, mental, and spiritual needs of victims, Amanda was rescued, and she and her daughter are now living proof that there is hope for trafficking survivors fighting abuse, addiction, and poverty. After talking to her and hearing her story and she making her story public, Mr. Speaker, she is a remarkable person—a survivor, a fighter against the scourge of slavery.

As a former judge, as you are, Mr. Speaker, I strongly believe in not only punishing people who commit crimes, but also helping victims rebuild their lives. As a father of 4, grandfather of 11, I call upon all other fathers in the United States to refuse to sit back while America's children are being sold in the marketplace of sex. We have a responsibility, not just as Members of the House or the Senate, but as fathers, to fight this scourge that is taking place in our country.

That is why, in the Senate, Senator CORNYN and, in the House, CAROLYN MALONEY and I authored the Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act: to provide law enforcement with new tools to apprehend those who commit these crimes and to provide resources for restoration for the survivors.

It is very encouraging that the House of Representatives and the United States Senate recently passed the Victims of Trafficking Act. It passed the Senate 99-0. It passed the House overwhelmingly, with only three voting against it. That very seldom happens in my experience in Congress, where one piece of legislation is so overwhelmingly supported by both sides of the aisle and in both the Senate and the House. This bipartisan bill has been signed into law by the President now.

Under this legislation, a special fund will be created to help these victims like Amanda get the shelter and services they need and provide them a fresh start. The law also ensures those who have been sold into slavery are treated as victims and not treated as criminals. Moreover, the legislation will strengthen law enforcement to give them tools to take down all human traffickers and organized criminal networks supporting them. Finally, the law targets the buyers, those predators who purchase children in the marketplace. The days of boys being boys in this country are going to end, and the law and law enforcement and the long arm of the law will go after these buyers. Partnerships on the Federal, State, and local level will be instrumental in stopping these crimes and rescuing victims.

So we must do everything possible to support survivors like Amanda—to break the cycle of sexual exploitation—overcome the pain of their experiences and help them to start a new life. We can achieve this if organizations like New Friends New Life and facilities like the Letot Center have the tools and resources they need to serve every victim. The Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act will help do this.

America must send the word that our children are not for sale, not in our town and not in our country.

And that is just the way it is.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until noon today.

Accordingly (at 10 o'clock and 56 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker at noon.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Patrick J. Conroy, offered the following prayer: Almighty God of the universe, we give You thanks for giving us another day.

We pray for the gift of wisdom to all with great responsibility in this House for the leadership of our Nation.

May all the Members have the vision of our Nation where respect and understanding are the marks of civility, and honor and integrity are the marks of one's character.

Give them the grace to see the best in those with whom they find disagreement and the courage to move together with them toward solutions that best serve our great Nation.

Bless us this day and every day, and may all that is done within these hallowed Halls be for Your greater honor and glory.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to clause 1, rule I, I demand a vote on agreeing to the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

The SPEAKER. The question is on the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

The question was taken; and the Speaker announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

The SPEAKER. Pursuant to clause 8, rule XX, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

The point of no quorum is considered withdrawn.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentlewoman from California (Ms. HAHN)